

demand change. There were massive protests by people angry at the lack of concern and the greed that had made the Triangle fire possible.

As a direct result of this horrible fire, there was a substantial effort to alleviate the most dangerous aspects of sweatshop manufacturing in New York and throughout the nation.

On February 17, 2001, the last survivor of the factory blaze, Rose Freedman, passed away at the age of 107.

It is important that we not let the memory of the Triangle Fire be extinguished from our memories.

It is for this reason that I have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 81 with my friend from New York, Mr. KING. This resolution recognizes the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Triangle Fire.

In my mind, this resolution is very simple and very straightforward. I taught my students about the fire in just this manner when I taught history class. But apparently, for reasons that escape me, it is just too controversial for today. And that is a shame.

In 1911, the Triangle Fire brought attention to the many serious problems facing factory employees and paved the way for worker protection laws.

In the year 2001, we cannot even recognize the memory of the fire and its victims on the House floor. But even worse than not considering a simple, non-binding resolution, is that we are letting history repeat itself.

The truth is that young workers around the world are dying needlessly in burning factories for the same reasons that the women died in the Triangle Fire.

Meeting the bottom line is apparently worth the cost of inhuman conditions. We are repeating the same mistakes that the U.S. remedied decades ago. And although we have standards to protect American workers, our trade agreements lack teeth and do not even mention labor rights. By ignoring international workers rights abuses, we are not only allowing, but assisting in the mistreatment of millions of workers in sweatshops around the globe.

It is our own fault that nothing has changed.

This global economy that we support, apparently without question or reservation, is allowing countries to fight for commerce by allowing the lowest standards. And if this standard allows for a factory to lock its doors, while children work for twelve-hour days to make children's toys at the lowest cost possible, so be it.

And if there is a 1993 fire at a factory in Bangkok which kills 188 workers, eerily similar to the Triangle Fire, then the company can just move its business to another location and re-set up shop—no questions asked. No sanctions imposed.

As William Greider points out in his introduction to the book, *The Triangle Fire*, "the passivity of government and the public simply leads further down a low road. More injustices appear, and they, too, must be tolerated in the name of commerce."

"In the name of commerce."

It is "in the name of commerce" that international laws will not produce reasonable standards for business performance.

It is in the name of competitive advantage, that instead of improving working conditions, countries are trying to out do each other with the lowest standards to attract our commerce.

Changing the attitude of all Americans is not easy, but it is the right thing to do. Everyone should be outraged by sweatshops. But they should be just as outraged that we in the United States are enabling the sweatshops to continue.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor House Concurrent Resolution 81, and remember the Triangle Fire. Remember what it did for our country. Honor the victims of the fire.

And recognize the ability of progressive thinking organizations, with the help of businesses groups and government support, to change the lives of people for the better.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BASS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, how different history would be if long ago people had taken Your holy word seriously: "Make justice your aim." Each day would be filled with promise and hope if all of us upon rising would make justice our aim. Without blaming anyone or without seeking applause, each day would lead to changing the world, if justice alone were our aim.

Justice itself would give balance to our daily routine, breathe contentment into our souls and set us free. Justice toward others would create a mutuality with every other person that would be fair, take us beyond expectation and codependency until we found trust and security.

Lord, if we as a people and as a Nation were to make justice our aim, how would this change our priorities? Could we change that much? In every age You alone, Lord God, take people beyond their wishful thinking and beyond themselves. You alone bring about lasting and true justice.

So, Lord God, in us and through us make justice Your aim now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker pro tempore's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SUNDRY MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Sundry messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY REPEAL

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, later this week, we will again vote to remove the marriage penalty from our Tax Code, and this time we have a President who will sign the bill.

Eighty-five percent of the American people want us to do this, and with good reason. Forty percent of all first marriages end in divorce, single-parent families have increased 248 percent since 1960, and the percentage of children born out of wedlock has gone from 10 to 33 percent during the same period. Mr. Speaker, we need to strengthen families in this country.

The Tax Code is not the only reason this has happened. For 30 years we had a welfare system that tore families apart. Fortunately, a Republican Congress reformed that system. We still spend \$1,000 supporting single-parent families for every \$1 we spend encouraging couples to marry and stay together.

Clearly, we have a lot of work to do to strengthen marriages in America. This week we will have a chance to change the Tax Code that penalizes couples for getting married in the first place. I urge all my colleagues to support this very important bill.

PASS FLAT SALES TAX AND ABOLISH IRS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, in 1998, Congress reformed the IRS and included two of my provisions. The first transferred the burden of proof from the taxpayer to the IRS; the second required judicial consent before the IRS could seize our property, and the results are now staggering. Property seizures dropped from 10,037 to 161 in the entire country.

The IRS had a license to steal, and they were stealing 10,000 properties a year. And if that is not enough to tax our gallbladders, the IRS is now complaining the new law is too tough. Beam me up here. It is time to tell these crybaby IRS thieves that we are going to pass a 15 percent flat sales tax and abolish them altogether.

I yield back what should be the next endangered species in the United States of America: The Internal Rectal Service.

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IS GOOD FOR EVERYONE

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank the current administration for its willingness, its simple willingness, to consider the economic consequences of previous executive regulations.

The Clinton administration promulgated new and somewhat draconian mining regulations in spite of the unforeseen economic hardships, especially in Nevada, that they would create, and in spite of the recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences study which stated that new Federal mining regulations were not necessary. Yet the previous administration went ahead, thinking it knew better than anyone else.

Well, finally, Nevadans and, may I say, all Americans can have faith that their Federal Government will not rush headlong into issuing new rules without listening to the public and to the experts.

It is nice to see the American people will once again have a say in their democracy, the way our Founding Fathers had envisioned it; the proper function of our Federal Government.

APPOINT U.S. ATTORNEY WITH D.C. ROOTS

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Wilma Lewis, the first woman in the history of the Nation's capital to be U.S. attorney, is leaving the office she has served with great distinction. From prosecution of hard-core street crime to complex white-collar violations, U.S. Attorney Lewis has left an extraordinary record.

She and her predecessor, Eric Holder, who went on to become Deputy Attorney General, had more in common than their background as the first African Americans to be appointed. They were both longtime Washingtonians who were also very able lawyers.

Most of the jurisdiction of the U.S. attorney here is D.C. criminal and civil law that elsewhere lies with a local prosecutor. Mayor Williams, Council Chair Cropp, and I have written President Bush to ask that he appoint as U.S. attorney a distinguished lawyer with deep roots in the D.C. community, as Ms. Lewis and Mr. Holder had. That is the way to be sure that not only Federal law is carried out, but that crime keeps coming down, as U.S. Attorneys Lewis and Holder assured.

FAMILY CARE TAX CREDIT ACT WILL LESSEN TAX BURDEN

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, providing help to families is one of the biggest reasons that I ran for Congress. I look forward to voting this week and eliminating the unfair marriage tax penalty and doubling the per-child deduction, but I believe we should do more to help families with tax relief, and I go one step further.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I have introduced the Family Care Tax Credit Act, which would lessen the tax burden on families who care for children or loved ones. Currently we give tax credit to families who pay for day care and other services, but families who have a parent taking care of their children are left on their own. My plan gives a fair and balanced approach to child care tax credits by giving help to all middle-income families with children.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken with parents in Kansas who tell me that they would like to stay home with their children, but they simply cannot overcome the economic barriers caused by the current Tax Code. My plan would simply remove one of those barriers. I am thankful that this week we will have the marriage penalty as a past memory, but believe that we can and should do more to help families.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

VETERANS OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 2001

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 801) to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve programs of educational assistance, to expand programs of transition assistance and outreach to departing servicemembers, veterans, and dependents, to increase burial benefits, to provide for family coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 801

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Veterans Opportunities Act of 2001".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. References to title 38, United States Code.

TITLE I—EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROVISIONS

Sec. 101. Increase in maximum allowable annual Senior ROTC educational assistance for eligibility for benefits under the Montgomery GI Bill.

Sec. 102. Expansion of work-study opportunities.

Sec. 103. Inclusion of certain private technology entities in the definition of educational institution.

Sec. 104. Expansion of special restorative training benefit to certain disabled spouses or surviving spouses.

Sec. 105. Distance education.

Sec. 106. Technical amendments to the Montgomery GI Bill.

TITLE II—TRANSITION AND OUTREACH PROVISIONS

Sec. 201. Authority to establish overseas veterans assistance offices to expand transition assistance.

Sec. 202. Timing of pre-separation counseling.

Sec. 203. Improvement in education and training outreach services for separating servicemembers and veterans.

Sec. 204. Expansion of outreach efforts to eligible dependents.

Sec. 205. Improvement of veterans outreach programs.

TITLE III—MEMORIAL AFFAIRS, INSURANCE, AND OTHER PROVISIONS

Sec. 301. Increase in burial benefits.

Sec. 302. Family coverage under Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

Sec. 303. Retroactive applicability of increase in maximum SGLI benefit for members dying in performance of duty on or after October 1, 2000.

Sec. 304. Increase in amount of assistance for automobile and adaptive equipment for certain disabled veterans.

Sec. 305. Increase in assistance amount for specially adapted housing.

Sec. 306. Revision of rules with respect to net worth limitation for eligibility for pensions for veterans who are permanently and totally disabled from a non-service-connected disability.

Sec. 307. Technical amendments.